

Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 DRC-01 /131 W

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R 141610Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2171

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USINT CAIRO

UNCLAS ATHENS 0294

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, GR

SUBJECT: NEW GREEK ARCHBISHOP SERAPHIM

REF: ATHENS 0260

1. PRESIDENT PHAEDON GHIZIKIS SELECTED BISHOP SERAPHIM
OF IOANNINA ARCHBISHOP OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH ON
JANUARY 12 PURSUANT TO RECOMMENDATION OF SPECIAL SYNOD.
SERAPHIM WILL BE INSTALLED JANUARY 16 IN TRADITIONAL CEREMONY
AT ATHENS CATHEDRAL. WHILE SERAPHIM RECEIVED OVERWHELMING
MAJORITY OF VOTES IN SPECIAL SYNOD AND WAS REGARDED BY GREEK
PUBLIC AS FAVORITE CANDIDATE, FACT THAT ABOUT ONE-HALF OF
TOTAL REIGNING BISHOPS WERE BARRED FROM VOTING BY CONSTITUENT ACT
HAS REPORTEDLY PROVOKED FURTHER DISCORD IN CHURCH. BEFORE VOTING,
SPOKESMAN FOR EXCLUDED BISHOPS SAID THEY WOULD NOT ACCEPT
NEW PRIMATE.

2. NEW ARCHBISHOP HAS GOOD REPUTATION AS ADMINISTRATOR
AND PROVIDED FOR HIS FLOCK DURING TENURE AS IOANNINA
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BISHOP AND IS CONSIDERED HARMONIZER WITHIN CHURCH. HE IS

61 YEARS OLD AND ON GOOD TERMS WITH PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS AND OTHERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT AS EVIDENCED BY HIS ADMINISTERING OATH TO NEW OFFICIALS ON NOVEMBER 25. AS PRESS REPORTED EARLIER, ARCHBISHOP SERAPHIM FOUGHT IN THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT UNDER GENERAL ZERVAS IN EARLY 1940'S WITH PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS AND BRIG. GENERAL D. IOANNIDES.

3. GREEK PATRIARCH DEMETRIOS' EXCEPTIONALLY WARM MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS WAS CARRIED WIDELY IN GREEK NEWS MEDIA.
TASCA

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To: STATE
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